

R.S.

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AN HUMBLE

Remonstrance

TO THE

LORDS and COMMONS

IN THE PRESENT

Convention Assembled,

May the Grace of the Holy Ghost enrich your Souls with his Divine Gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, Council, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord; whereby you may all attain to the discovery of the True Catholick Apostolick Faith of Christ, and have Grace to Embrace it, which will beget in you that true Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, in this Life; and the incomprehensible Bliss of the next Life: Which is so great and perfect, that if only one Soul in this whole Nation were to be Saved; every one in particular, ought to strive with all his Endeavours to be so Vertuous, as to be that one: For to loose that Happiness, and be condemned to Hell for all Eternity, is so great, so superlative a Misery; that if any one Soul by going to Hell might thereby free all the other Souls of this whole Nation from Hell, and send them to Heaven; in Prudence and Charity he ought not to do it, but rather choose to go to Heaven himself, and let all the rest go to Hell; for our Lord saith in the Gospel, What doth it avail a Man to gain the whole World, and loose his own Soul; For the Torments of Hell are insufferable, if it were but for one Day; but being Eternal, they are infinitely insufferable; and therefore, for no respect a prudent Man ought to be induced to go to Hell, or do that which may deserve Hell.

Seeing then that every one of us must, after this short Life, be in Heaven, or in Hell for all Eternity; and that true Faith is necessary to Salvation: For without the (True) Faith, it is impossible to please God; It's to be admired that the Professors of so many different Religions as are now in England, should all be confident that they are in the only True Faith; and which for the most part they

have received from their Education. As there is but one God, one Christ, so that there can be but one True Faith: It's impossible therefore that they can all be in a True Saving Faith; each one therefore ought to Examine the grounds of his Belief, and consider wherein it exceedeth the Faith of the Dissenters from him, who are as Prudent and Learned as himself.

It's more to be admir'd, that all in general should have such an Aversion as they have to the *Catholick Religion*, and so much Hate and Persecute the Professors of it; seeing our Fore-Fathers, from the time of *St. Gregory the Great*, who sent *Augustine* the Monk, (his Companions) from *Rome*, and Converted our Nation from being *Heathens*, to the Faith of Christ, were all *Roman Catholics*, till *Henry the VIII's* time, which was 800 years: And the *English* Nation and Church, then flourished as much as any Nation and Church, in the *Christian World*: Seeing likewise that now the Professors of the different Religions, do believe, and confess, that as our Fore-Fathers might be Saved in and by the *Roman Catholick Faith*, so now the Professors of the same Faith may be Saved in, and by it.

It's true that many Controversies are produced *Pro* and *Con* about the Truth of the Faith; for though Holy Scriptures may be understood in different Senses. And the Holy Fathers, who were not acquainted with the several Religions so lately brought into *England*, in some Expressions may seem to favour each of them; and so the Learned, and able Men of all Professions, find enough to say for themselves, so as not to be convinc'd.

Wherefore setting alone endless Controversies, I shall only desire you briefly to reflect on five Things, which are eminent in the *Catholick Roman Church*, and in no other Church, and they are all necessarily to be found in the True Church of Christ.

The *First* is *Antiquity* from the time of Christ to this present time, and so to continue without Interruption till the end of the World: For our Lord *Mat. 28. 20.* promised the Apostles, *That he would abide with his Church till the end of the World.* Which *Antiquity* is found in the *Catholick Church*, which hath had a constant Succession of Pastors and Teachers, from the time of the Apostles to this time, as by a true Catalogue of the Bishops of *Rome* from *St. Peter* to the present Bishops of *Rome* doth appear. And that Church alone hath had the Custody of the *Holy Scriptures*, and by her Authority we believe them to be the true Word of God.

The *Second* is *Universality*, its being Preached to all the World, and Imbraced by many Nations, and will at length by all. And these two make it to be the *Catholick Church*, which we profess in the *Apostles Creed* to believe in. For the Lord bid his Apostles, *To go and Preach to*

all Nations, and to observe all Things which he had Commanded them. And that hath ever since been practis'd by the *Catholic Church*; and is at present, by sending *Priests* and *Missioners* into the *East* and *West-Indies*, to the *Turks*, *Persians*, and to all the World; to the great Glory of God, propagating of the Faith and Salvation of Millions of Souls.

The *Third* is *Sanctity*, forsaking the World with its Riches and Pleasures, to serve the Lord in *Evangelical Poverty* and Perfection, according to the advice of our Saviour to the Young-man, *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all thou hast, and give it to the Poor*; Which is practis'd by Thousands Men and Women in the *Catholic Church*, who spend their days in *Poverty*, *Chastity*, *Obedience* to their Superiors, *Mortification* and *Prayer*, with great Perfection; and many Servants of God are by the Holy Ghost Elevated to a *Supernatural Contemplation* of Heavenly Mysteries, taught by St. Paul to his Disciples St. Denis of *Athens*, and by him explicated in his Books of *Mystical Divinity*: Of which *Catholic Doctors* have ever since wrote many things, and thousands of Gods Servants attending to a *Contemplative Life*, are made Partakers of such Heavenly Blessings.

The *Fourth* is the *Gift of Miracles*, which frequently happen in the *Catholic Church*, as may easily be seen by those who with Attention read the *Ecclesiastical History*, and *Lives of the Saints*, according to the Power which our Lord gave to his Apostles, and left in his Church: And 'tis not probable, that God would deny the Gift of Miracles to his Church under the Gospel, which he granted to the Church of the Jews. And it's certain that many, and great Miracles have been done in all Ages in the *Catholic Church*: Let one instance be, the wonderful Incorruption of the Bodies of some great Servants of God, and of no others, as a Testimony of their Sanctity; as Travellers into *Catholic Countries* may easily discover: Which if it were not *Supernatural*, but to be obtain'd by Art, or Expences, great Princes would have it.

The *Fifth* is *Infallibility in matters of Faith*, promised by Christ to his Church; That the gates of Hell should not prevail against it; and therefore he that will not hear his Church, to be esteemed as a Heathen, and Publican; And that the Holy Ghost should abide with his Church to the end of the World, and lead it into all Truth; And therefore St. Paul calleth the Church, *The Pillar and Firmament of the Truth*: So that the Church which was once the True Church of Christ, must ever remain so; and by consequence, will never stand in need of being Reformed in matters of Faith: All which is verified in the *Catholic Roman Church*, which never received any thing for an Article of Faith, which is not so to this day; and so it hath been the stile of all *General Councils*, which represent the whole Church, to denounce an *Anathema*, or Curse against

all those who would not receive their Definitions in matters of Faith ; as proceeding from the assistance of the Holy Ghost, according to the saying of the *Apostles* in the first Council. *It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost, and to Us.* And accordingly in the *Catholick Roman Church*, their hath been a continual Succession of Bishops, and Priests, and Teachers of the Word of God, under a Visible Head of the Church from the *Apostles* till this present time ; by which means the true Faith hath been conveyed from one Age to another, and Unity, and Uniformity in matters of Faith hath been preserved amongst all Nations professing the *Catholick Faith*.

All which being considered, it may appear more then probable to any Discreet person, that the *Catholick Roman Church*, having all those Signs of the True Church, may be the only True Church of Christ, as she is believed to be by the greatest part of the Christian World ; and that the Salvation of the Soul may be obtained there better then in any other Church. Why then may not *Roman Catholics* be permitted to enjoy the Liberty of their Consciences, as well as all other Sects in *England* are? At least there is no reason why they should be Hated, and Persecuted with so much Violence, by pulling down of their Chapels, and Imprisoning their Priests, and Pillaging, as they have done, above 1000 *Catholick Noblemen*, and *Gentlemens Houses* in *England* ; carrying away, or Burning their Goods, without any pretended Cause given ; unless it be, that the Devil hath a great hatred against them, and their Religion, as the best means to save Souls ; and doth therefore instigate all Professors of New Religions to joyn together against them.

Then consider, that in the *Protestant, Presbyterian*, and other Churches of *England*, none of these Signs of the True Church of Christ are to be found. Not *Antiquity*, for the *Protestant Church* began in *Edward the VI's* time ; for then the 39 *Articles* of their Belief were first made, and published, their *Book of Common-Prayer* compos'd, and the *Mass* prohibited ; and a pittiful, and contemptible shift it is for them to leap over 1000 years, and say, That their Church, is conformable to the Primitive Church ; as if our Lord had no True Church on Earth all that time.

The *Presbyterian Religion* in like manner, had its beginning from *John Calvin*, the first Inventor of it ; the *Lutherans*, from *Luther*, and so of the rest.

Neither can they pretend to any *Universality* of their Faith ; for the *Protestant Church* is extended no further then the King of *England's* Dominions : The *Lutherans, Calvinists, Zuinglians*, or *Sacramentarians*, in like manner have but a few small Provinces for their extent : Neither have any of them ever Converted any Nation of *Infidels* to the

the Faith of Christ, or do they endeavour to do it; but have had their beginning, and growth, by perverting many poor *Catholicks* from their Faith, by several unjust Means which have been us'd; as by a *French Book* Entitled, *La naissance dell' Heresie*, is very well set forth.

Neither 3dly. have they the Profession of *Evangelical Perfection* amongst them; or are any of them eminent in Supernatural Sanctity. I do not deny them Moral Vertues, in which many of them, and especially Women, are very eminent; and so are many *Türks* and *Heathens*. But of Mystical Divinity, or Supernatural Contemplation, and Union with God in their Prayers, they have no Experience; and their *Doctors* write very little of such things.

Fourthly, No *Miracles* have been done by any out of the *Catholick Church*, which the *Protestants* very well know; and therefore they have recourse to a poor shift, by saying, *That Miracles are ceased*; but our dear Lord, as he confirmed his Heavenly Doctrine by many great *Miracles*, so he will have his Church in all Ages to be distinguish'd from all false Churches by the operation of *Miracles*.

Neither 5ly. Hath any but the *Catholick Church* the confidence to pretend to *Infallibility* in Doctrine, or a constant assistance of the Holy Ghost, but confess their own Church; and accuse all other Churches to be liable to many Errors in Faith; and although their first Founders had, by their own profession, nothing but humane Prudence to rely on, for their new Doctrine; and that with being liable to Passions, Self-ends, to Ignorance, and Illusions of the Devil as much as others; yet they esteem them fit Instruments to Reform the whole Church of Christ, and Persecute others with Torments, and Death for not adhearing to them, and venturing their Souls in such broken Vessels, through the Tempestuous Sea of this Life with them; what greater Cruelty can there be?

In former Ages there have been many Learned Men, who have pretended likewise to Reform the seeming Errors, to them, of the *Catholick Church*, as *Arius*, *Pellagius*, our Country-man, *Nestorius*, *Marichew*, and forty other; and have inticed Millions of People to forsake the *Catholick Church* and follow them: (For mens Natures are too much addicted to Novelties in matters of Faith) and at length they were all of them found to be Seducers, and their Followers *Hetericks*, as not only *Catholicks*, but likewise *Protestants* do confess; and having made a great noise in the World, after a little time, they vanished away, and came to nothing, as at present is seen; and the *Catholick Church* still remain'd firm, and unmoveable, as she was at first, and relies on the Promise of Christ and Assistance of the Holy Ghost to continue so still, till the end of the World. *Divum est contra stimulum calcitrare.*

Is it not then more then probable that *Luther*, and *Calvin*, &c. and their Followers are no better ; and that as the former *Hereticks* ran great risk of loosing their Souls, by forsaking the *Catholick Church*, and following the Opinions of private Men, so the Professors of the new Religions of the last, and this Age, may run the same risk ?

O if we could but know the Wiles and Subtilties of the Devil in seeking to devour Souls, and seduce them into Errors ; Who, as the Apostle saith, *like a roaring Lyon seeketh whom he may devour, Cui mistice fortas in Fide*. You would be more afraid of being brought under his Tyrannical Slavery, by adhearing to so many new Religions, then by permitting that which you call *Papery*, you would not apprehend any danger of Slavery : Were your Fore-Fathers, who for 800 years continually lived in the Profession, and Practice of the *Catholick Religion*, under any Slavery thereby ? Do the Subjects of the *Emperor*, the Kings of *Spain* and *France*, and other *Catholick Princes*, at present think it any Slavery to profess the *Catholick Faith* ; or rather, that thereby they enjoy the true Liberty of the Adopted Sons of God, and Heirs of Heaven.

Pray reflect on how many Rebellions, Civil Wars, Dissentions, Penal Laws, Tests, Persecutions, Conspiracies, Perjuries, and Miseries, have been in this Nation since it changed the *Catholick Faith* for so many new Religions ? And what appearance of better times is there as long as they remain amongst you ?

Your present King, ever since he came to the Crown, with great Prudence hath Governed His People in Peace, and Prosperity ; excepting the Invasion of the Duke of *Monmouth*, which by His care, and the fidelity of His Subjects, was soon quell'd. Now a second Invasion hath been procured from *Holland*, not by the sober part of the Nation, but by some discontented Persons ; which if He had not perfidiously been betray'd by His Own Subjects, might have had no better success than the former ; but they have obtained what they aimed at, and the P. of O. is come ; and what is like to follow, but the impoverishing, and ruine of the Nation, by vast Expences, loss of Trading, Dissentions, Foreign and Civil Wars. And for no other cause but by a subtile suggestion of the Devil, you were made to apprehend, and fear, that by giving *Liberty of Conscience* to *Roman Catholics*, all your new Religions would have melted away like Snow against the Sun ; which if it should have happened, it must have been by the Finger of God, for the good of your Souls ; for there was no Human probability of it, there not being one *Papist* in the Nation for 500 *Protestants*. And besides, you had the re-iterated Promise of a just and Mild King, *That He would protect the Protestant Church, as it was by Law Established* ; which they have now forfeited,

by

by their forsaking Him, and adhering to a Foreign Prince His Enemy.

O if you would serious consider the danger with your own dear Souls, and the Souls of those whom you represent are in on all sides. Your being thus Armed, and in Consultation against your Sovereign, whom God hath set over you, and His Own Right by Succession, is, and will be a crying sin against you, as long as it is non-retracted. Our Lord saith, *Matt. 7. 14. Straite is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth to Life, and few there are who find it.* And why, but because there are but few, who walk the narrow way of the true Faith and Law of Christ, serving him in Spirit, and Truth; in respect of the multitudes of *Infidels*, and *Hereticks*, who walk in the broad way of Sensuality, and Human inventions, to their own Perdition.

God is so perfect, that he can draw Good out of Evil; this your Defection from your *Catholick King*, may be a Motive of concluding a Peace between the Emperour and the King of *France*, whereby the Emperour would be in a condition to prosecute with success, the War against the *Great Turk*; and the King of *France* and other *Catholick Princes*, would easily be induced to employ Their Military Forces against this Nation, for the injustice done to their King, till they have restored Him again to His Royal Throne and Government; which how dear it will cost the Nation, if it happen, may easily be imagined. It is no small comfort therefore, to consider that it is yet in your own power to do it your selves, at a cheaper rate, by humbly Inviting His Majesty to return to His People, proposing such Conditions to Him, as He may with Honour, and Conscience, be able to accept of.

By your acting vigorously, and efficaciously in the effecting hereof, would be a means to divert the Lord's Punishments from you, and purchase his Blessings for you, and us all; It will deliver you from the imminent danger of a bloody War, and re-unite the Three Nations; and this would be a more healing *Conversion*, than that was a healing *Parliament*, which restored *CHARLES* the Second to His Throne. The God of Peace and Mercy incline your Hearts, and Wills in a joynt, and diligent application hereunto, and Crown your endeavours with the accomplishing of it, to His great Honour, and Service, and the Spiritual and Temporal comfort of us all, *Amen*.

Roman Catholicks believe that there is but one God, and they adore and worship none but him with a Divine worship; but give a civil worship or respect to civil Magistrates, as *Protestants*, and *Presbyterians* do, by bowing or kneeling to the King, to Judges, and other Magistrates, and by calling them Right Honourable, Right Worshipful.

And

And they give a Religious worship, or respect, to Religious things, as *Protestants* and *Presbyterians* do, by putting off their Hats in their Churches; by kneeling before the Bread, and Wine in the Communion; by teaching their Children to kneel, and ask their Parents Blessing, and the like; which they have from many examples of the *Old*, and *New Testaments*, as when the Sons of the *Prophets* bowed to *Eliseus* down to the ground, 2 Kings 2. 15. And *St. John* Evangelist, fell at the feet of the *Angel* to worship him. Revel. 19. 10. And the *Angel* refusing that respect from an *Apostle*, yet he did it again, in chap. 22. v. 8.

They believe, that in the Communion, they receive the true Body of *Christ*, which was born of the *Virgin Mary*, and died on the Cross for us; but it is not a Corruptible or Mortal Body, but a Living and Spiritual Body; such as our Lord had after his Resurrection, and such as *St. Paul* speaketh of, 1 Cor. 15.

They believe, that when they confess their sins to a *Priest*, if they be rightly disposed, the *Priest* hath power to absolve them from their sins, by saying, *I absolve thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Not of himself, but from *Christ*, who said to his *Apostles*, and their Successors the *Priests*, whose sins you remit, they are remitted unto them, &c. John. 20. 23. even as a Minister, who Baptizing a Man newly Converted to the Faith, hath power to remit all his sins, original and actual, by sprinkling Water on him, and saying, *I Baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; for *Christ* hath given that virtue to his Sacraments,

They believe, that in this life we are all sinners, and uncertain of our Salvation; and therefore with fear and trembling we Pray to God our selves to have mercy on us; and we desire our Friends here on Earth to Pray to God for us, and we desire our Friends in Heaven the Angels and Saints to Pray to God for us. And because the Prayers of the Faithful do avail much with God, they think that the Prayers of the Saints and Angels, who are all Faithful, may be more efficacious than those of their Friends here on Earth, who are sinners. And they believe, that the Angels and Saints in Heaven can hear us, and see, and know how to do us good, as well as the Devils in Hell can hear us, and see, and know how to do us mischief, and tempt us to offend God.

FINIS.

